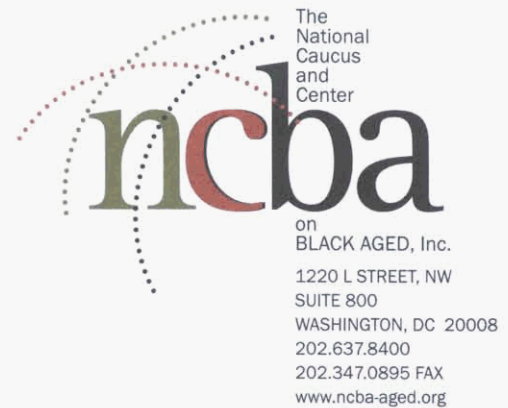


January 31, 2006

Kevin J. Martin
Michael Copps
Jonathan Adelstein
Deborah Tate
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554



Re: NPRM for Broadband Video Franchise Reform

Dear Commissioners:

On behalf of the National Caucus and Center on Black Aged, Inc. (NCBA), I am writing so that our endorsement of the Video Choice Act is included in the FCC's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for Broadband Video Franchise Reform.

The legislation being considered will result in consumers having a choice of video service providers and will stimulate competition in the monopoly-ridden cable industry that will drive down cable rates. Escalating cable rates hit the elderly, most of who live on fixed incomes, especially hard. Since 1996, cable rates have increased nearly three times the rate of inflation. That places extreme financial hardship on our nation's older black citizens.

The Video Choice Act calls for streamlined federal regulation of the video service industry. That and the proposed elimination of local franchise requirements will attract new entrants, such as telephone companies and power companies. The competitive pressure they will bring to bear on cable companies will result in lower prices and faster innovations, such as High Definition video, video-on-demand, and development of interactive programming. The elderly watch television more hours daily than other citizens and would benefit immediately from these entertainment enhancements as well as other interactive video applications in the areas of personal security and health care.

Just as important, the Video Choice Act precludes discriminatory practices such as redlining and preserves the FCC's authority to enforce rules that protect consumers' privacy. Furthermore, the Act would protect the interests of local municipalities and ensure they receive the franchise revenues they're due from new entrants and cable companies alike.

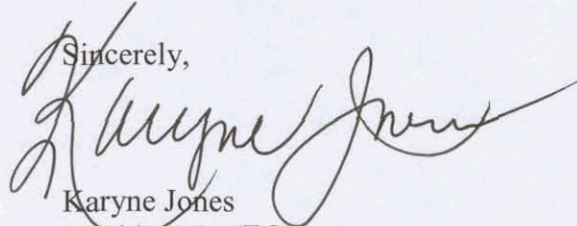
Passage of this legislation, in concert with promulgation of new FCC rules, would help ensure fair competition in this industry. I believe the FCC has – and should exercise – authority under Section 621(a) to prevent practices and demands that amount to an unreasonable refusal to award a competitive franchise. This section was intended to

*Improving the
quality of life
for elderly
African Americans
and low income
minorities*

reduce barriers to competitive entry caused by the franchising process. I urge you to use this authority.

I thank you for the opportunity to express the NCBA's support for video franchise reform and competition among video service providers. The relief from escalating cable rates that the Video Choice Act will provide is especially important to our nation's elderly African American and minority citizens.

Sincerely,



Karyne Jones
President & CEO